



Iowa Outdoors

Iowa Department of Natural Resources
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2005 IOWA ROOSTER PHEASANT HARVEST TOPS 800,000

BOONE – Hunters in Iowa harvested more than 800,000 pheasants in 2005, placing the Hawkeye State second behind only South Dakota in the number of pheasants harvested. The 2005 harvest estimate was a 50,000 rooster increase from 2004, but remains 17 percent below the 10-year average, and 36 percent below the historical average.

The harvest and participation estimates are based on responses from an annual survey sent to more than 8,000 license holders by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

The decade 1996 to 2005, Iowa pheasant hunters harvested an average of 970,000 roosters. It is the first time in Iowa history when a 10-year pheasant harvest estimate has fallen below 1 million roosters.

An estimated 136,192 pheasant hunters took to the field including nearly 29,000 who were from out of state. The number of resident pheasant hunters increased 8 percent, while the number of nonresident hunters decreased 7 percent. Hunters from Wisconsin and Minnesota accounted for 36 percent of nonresident hunters.

Other small game estimates include a 40 percent decline in the quail harvest. An estimated 18,578 quail hunters harvested 40,675 quail, down from the 68,256 in 2004. An estimated 7,147 partridge hunters took 14,674 birds during the season, which was a 17 percent increase from 2004.

The estimated 40,225 rabbit hunters harvested 210,591 cottontails in 2005, a 19 percent decrease from 2004. Only 1 percent of licensed hunters indicated they hunted jackrabbits in 2005. Those 1,870 hunters harvested 671 jackrabbits, mostly in conjunction with other hunting.

For more information, contact Bogenschutz at 515-432-2823.

###

MILD WEATHER GOOD FOR PHEASANTS

BOONE – Iowa pheasant hunters can be cautiously optimistic they will see more pheasants during the 2006 hunting season, thanks a mild winter and spring.

Todd Bogenschutz, upland wildlife biologist with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, uses a formula based on the previous winter snow cover and spring rainfall and temperature to predict this falls pheasant population.

Bogenschutz said pheasants are not out of the woods yet, as many nests will begin hatching in June. Heavy rains can cause the largest impact, washing out nests before eggs hatch or the young pheasants can escape the rising water. Heavy rainfall across north Iowa and in certain areas of southwest Iowa in May could have some impact on nesting success.

With a dry first half of June predicted, many hens have a good chance for a successful nest. “The weather data is correct about 80 percent of the time and over the last five years the models have been correct,” he said.

The DNR’s August roadside count is the best gauge of fall upland populations. The survey results are posted on the DNR’s website at www.iowadnr.com around Sept. 15.

For more information, contact Bogenschutz at 515-432-2823.

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GRANTS AVAILABLE TO RURAL FIRE DEPARTMENTS

AMES – The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has grant money available for Iowa’s rural fire departments to help with equipment in battling wildfires. The grants offer funding assistance for wildfire suppression equipment, personal protective equipment, and communications equipment.

Gail Kantak, fire supervisor with the DNR's forestry bureau, said fire departments would receive information in the mail about the grants. Kantak is encouraging fire department to send in a Wildland Fire Report whenever they respond to a wildland fire or provide assistance to a prescribed or controlled wildland fire. Departments actively returning these reports can receive priority points for the Volunteer Fire Assistance grant application.

Wildland Fire reporting forms are available at www.iowadnr.com/forestry/fire.html.

"It is important for rural fire departments to return these reports so we can assess the actual demands on our rural fire departments as a result of wildfire," she said. The wildland fire reports will be compiled locally and nationally and will be reported to Congress.

The grants information is being mailed to each Iowa Rural Fire Department, and is currently available at www.iowadnr.com/forestry/fire.html. The grants package includes:

- **Volunteer Fire Assistance Application:** A 50-50 cost share grants for wildfire equipment with a maximum grant of \$3,500 per department. Applications are due October 15, 2006.
- **Iowa Wildland Fire Report Form:** This form can be copied, completed and faxed in as wildland fires are responded to and as prescribed/controlled fires are assisted with.
- **Iowa DNR Forestry Bureau Fire Program Opportunities:** Outlines the programming opportunities available to Iowa's fire suppression agencies by the Iowa DNR Forestry Bureau in cooperation with federal, state and local partners.
- **Dry Hydrant Grants** are also currently available. "If a community or a region within a fire departments response area is in need of more available water sources, please consider dry hydrants as an option," Kantak said. They do not have to be a standard pond or water-body access, she said.

For more information, contact Kantak at 515-233-1161.

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SUMMER BRINGS PROJECT AWARE, OTHER VOLUNTEER EVENTS

DES MOINES – The sunny days of June mean summer is back, along with a host of outdoors volunteer opportunities. Keepers of the Land, the volunteer program within the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR), encourages all Iowans to join these efforts.

- **Project AWARE 2006:** There is still time to register for the fourth annual Project AWARE (A Watershed Awareness River Expedition). This year, the weeklong river cleanup heads to southeast Iowa. Hundreds of volunteers will float the Iowa and English rivers, remove garbage and learn about natural resources topics. Visit www.iowaprojectaware.com for more information, including registration materials.
- **Interpretive Programs:** Volunteers with a knack for talking about the outdoors can help improve educational offerings at Wilson Island State Park. Officials request volunteer interpreters to present educational programs on weekends. For more information, contact Chris Anunson at (712) 642-2069 or at chris.anunson@dnr.state.ia.us.
- **GPS Mapping:** Put your experience with GPS (Global Positioning System) mapping to good use at Wapsipinicon State Park. Officials request volunteer assistance in mapping park boundaries, facilities, trails and caves. For more information, contact Dennis Murphy at (319) 462-2761 or at dennis.murphy@dnr.state.ia.us.
- **Office assistance:** Help the DNR's energy and waste bureau in a data entry volunteer position. Assistance is also needed with filing, reviewing files and other office work. For more information, contact Alex Moon at (515) 281-6807 or at alex.moon@dnr.state.ia.us.

A big thanks to the Loess Hills volunteers. Last weekend, the 12th Annual GRASS (Great Race Against Shrubs and Shade) event attracted nearly 60 volunteers for a prairie workday. Participants donated more than 200 hours, worth an estimated \$3,300, helping to remove invasive woody species from a section of prairie at the Loess Hills in western Iowa.

Find more information, including our online events calendar, at www.keepersoftheland.org.

For more information, contact Merry Rankin at (515) 281-0878 or at Merry.Rankin@dnr.state.ia.us.

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RIVER CLEANUP VOLUNTEERS COMING TO SOUTHEAST IOWA

DES MOINES – In two weeks, an armada of trash-seeking canoeists will float through southeast Iowa during the fourth annual Project AWARE (A Watershed Awareness River Expedition).

Registrations are still being accepted for this weeklong river cleanup. This year, the event will bring hundreds of volunteers to the Iowa and English rivers. On Saturday, June 17, the expedition will set out from a site near Iowa City, arriving at the Mississippi River on June 24.

Along the way, participants will fish pop cans and plastic sacks from the water, wrench tires and barrels out of muddy embankments and spend their evenings learning about natural resources. Check www.iowaprojectaware.com for registration forms, and evening program list and more.

Volunteers can join the expedition for one day, the entire week or anywhere in between. The program provides canoes, free camping, low-cost meals and evening “infotainment” programs.

In addition, look for trash from this year’s project at the Iowa State Fair. Ogden artist David Williamson will help fairgoers turn some of that recovered garbage into a sculpture.

Since its first outing on the Maquoketa River in 2003, Project AWARE has brought volunteers to a different Iowa watershed every June. Making a public stand for water quality, the program lets everyday citizens make a difference — one stretch of river, one piece of trash at a time.

Project AWARE advocates a perspective based on the “watershed,” or the region of land draining into a body of water. As Project AWARE volunteers learn, much of the trash, chemicals and other materials used on the land will eventually end up in the water.

This year, in response to public demand, Project AWARE’s organizers are offering an additional service. Local groups wishing to put on cleanups can apply for CLEAR (Community Leaders Enhancing Area Rivers) mini-grants worth \$1,000. Find more information at www.iowater.net.

Two volunteer programs within the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) — IOWATER and the Keepers of the Land — work with numerous sponsors to organize AWARE.

For more information, contact Brandon Harland at (515) 281-3150 or at brandon.harland@dnr.state.ia.us.

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IOWA FISHING REPORT

For the week of June 6, 2006

www.iowadnr.com

For current information on fishing conditions for your lake or area, contact the office in that district. Phone numbers are listed with each district report.

Northwest

Spirit Lake (Dickinson): The walleye bite has been good for fish 13 to 17 inches. Fish can be caught anywhere from 12 to 20 feet of water. Areas producing the most fish are Anglers Bay, Buffalo Run and Reeds Run. Drifting with leeches and trolling crankbaits are top choices right now. Finding weeds in 8 to 10 feet of water will also hold fish. The night bite from shore has slowed considerably. Smallmouth bass are being caught on leeches and artificial tube jigs or small finesse plastics. Try any of the lake's rock piles. Largemouth bass fishing is good using top-water baits and slow-twitching, weedless worms around submerged brush and vegetation in Anglers Bay. Bluegills are being caught in Hales Slough, Trickle Slough and the north end of Anglers Bay. Use a small jig and wax worm in 2 to 6 feet of water.

West Okoboji Lake (Dickinson): Anglers are catching freshwater drum in shallow water with small grubs and tube baits. Largemouth bass are being caught around docks throughout the lake. Pitching plastic worms around the docks works well. For smallmouth bass, fish near the reef with jerkbaits. Bluegills are starting to make beds. Look for sandy areas in 6 to 10 feet of water. Tipping jigs with small worms or leeches are good baits.

East Okoboji Lake (Dickinson): Walleyes are being caught on the south end of the lake drifting leeches and in and below the spillway using jigs with white twisters. White bass are also being caught in and below the spillway, and around bridges in the evening, using jigs with white twisters. Bluegills can be found around docks. Channel catfish are being caught at the north end using cut baits.

Little Spirit Lake (Dickinson): Crappies are being caught around the brush on the south end using minnows under bobbers. Most fish are 9 to 12 inches. Bluegills and largemouth bass are also biting in the shallows around submerged brush. Huge bullheads are being caught on night crawlers.

Silver Lake (Dickinson): Walleye fishing has been fair trolling crankbaits and spinners with night crawlers. Anglers are catching a mixed bag of white bass, bullheads and freshwater drum while fishing for walleyes. Channel catfish are being caught on cut bait fishing from shore in the evening.

Willow Creek (Osceola): Largemouth bass fishing is fair using top-water baits along the shoreline. Fishing has been fair for 5 to 8-inch bluegills using worms or wax worms on a small jig.

Five Island Lake (Palo Alto): The walleye bite has been fair to good, although sorting is required to find bigger fish.

Silver Lake (Palo Alto): Big bullheads are being caught on night crawlers. A few yellow perch and crappies are being caught.

Meredith Pit (Palo Alto): Bluegills are being caught on artificial baits.

West Fork Des Moines River (Emmet/Palo Alto): Channel catfishing has been excellent for 2 to 4 pound fish using night crawlers or cut bait.

Lake Pahoja (Lyon): Crappie fishing is good using minnows from shore for 7 to 8-inch fish. Bluegill fishing is good from shore using small worms. Bluegills are from 5 to 8 inches.

Big Sioux River (Lyon): Anglers are catching catfish and carp below Klondike Dam. Try using stink baits and night crawlers for action. Use chicken liver or cut bait for bigger fish.

Brushy Creek (Webster): Fishing remains good. Some nice walleyes have been caught during the day and at dusk, mostly using leeches. Bluegills in large quantities can be found, but sorting through small ones is required. Crappies have been hitting on a plain minnow or a crappie jig tipped with a minnow fished around the trees in the bays. Anglers are catching a lot of bass.

Black Hawk Lake (Sac): Walleye fishing is fair to good trolling crankbaits in the dredge cuts. Remember the 15-inch minimum length limit. Channel catfish are fair on a variety of baits.

Storm Lake (Buena Vista): Fishing is excellent for channel catfish around the island and on the rocky shorelines using night crawlers, leeches or cut bait. White bass fishing is good while trolling for walleyes, or by using twisters from shore. Walleye fishing is good to excellent trolling crankbaits. There are a lot of fish between 16 and 18 inches. Remember the 15-inch minimum length limit, with only one walleye longer than 22 inches per day. White bass fishing is good trolling crankbaits.

Yellow Smoke (Crawford): Bluegill fishing is fair to good drifting or slow trolling small jigs tipped with wax worms or a piece of night crawler. The bluegills are done spawning and have moved to deeper water. A few crappies and white bass are being caught using the same technique as for bluegills.

Clear Lake (Cerro Gordo): Walleye fishing is good. Anglers are catching fish trolling crankbaits in shallow water. Some walleye are being caught off the docks using minnows and night crawlers. Live bait anglers are catching a lot of sub-legal walleye. Remember Clear Lake has a 14-inch minimum length limit. White bass are being caught while trolling for walleyes. The yellow bass spawn is nearly complete. Angers are still catching some fish in 3 to 8 feet of water near the reefs. The Island and Dodge's Point are the best areas. Use small jigs, minnows and night crawlers for the best yellow bass action. Bullhead fishing is fair at the Ventura Grade and the Ventura Access. Channel catfish are hitting on night crawlers and chicken liver in the west end of the lake.

Rice Lake (Winnebago): Bullhead fishing is good using night crawlers on the bottom.

Beeds Lake (Franklin): Largemouth bass are being caught throwing spinner baits and plastics along the shoreline. Bluegills are on the beds and fishing is good. Use small jigs and night crawlers.

Crystal Lake (Hancock): Crappie fishing has slowed. Anglers are catching good numbers of bullheads on night crawlers and catfish on liver and prepared baits.

East Fork Des Moines River (Kossuth): Channel catfish are excellent using cut bait and worms near the snags.

Lake Smith (Kossuth): Channel catfish are hitting chicken liver in the evening.

Lake Cornelia (Wright): Channel catfish are hitting on chicken liver or night crawlers. Fish in the evening on the north shoreline for the best action. Bullheads are hitting on night crawlers fished on the bottom. Some walleyes are being caught drifting minnows.

Morse Lake (Wright): Yellow perch are being caught on small minnows and jigs.

For more information on fishing in northwest Iowa, call the regional office in Spirit Lake at 712-336-1840.

Southwest

Don Williams (Boone): Bluegill fishing has been good using night crawlers. Fishing is good for crappies on minnows and leaches. Walleye fishing has been good with leaches for 14 to 16-inch fish. Channel catfish are being caught using chicken liver. Largemouth bass fishing has been good with fish over 15 inches.

Hickory Grove (Story): Crappie fishing has been good using worms or minnows. Bluegill fishing has been good on worms. Largemouth bass fishing has been good, particularly around the rockier areas.

Big Creek (Polk): Fishing for nice-sized bluegill has been good using worms on hooks. Crappie fishing has been fair to good using jigs and minnows with the better fishing offshore in deeper water. Anglers are catching smaller walleyes on jigs and minnows.

Easter Lake (Polk): Fishing is good for 8 to 9-inch crappies using jigs and minnows. Bluegill fishing is good using night crawlers and bobbers. Several walleye have been reported, with some over 15 inches. Largemouth bass fishing is fair along the rocky areas. Channel catfish fishing has been good on night crawlers.

Saylorville Lake (Polk): Crappie fishing has been good to excellent, particularly in the Marina area and below the outlet from Big Creek Lake. The shallow water coves have also produced some nice crappie fishing. White bass/wipers are being caught below the outlet from Big Creek.

Below Saylorville Dam (Polk): Walleye fishing has been excellent in the river using twister tails, leaches, minnows or jigs. White bass/wiper fishing has been fair using jigs and/or minnows. Crappie fishing has been good in the tailwater ponds with jigs and minnows.

Below Scott Street Dam: (Polk): Fishing has been good to excellent for 8 to 12-inch white bass.

Rock Creek (Jasper): Crappie fishing is good to excellent on jigs and minnows. Bluegill fishing has been good from shore and from boats using night crawlers from 3 to 5 feet deep. Channel catfish in the 10 to 15-pound range are being caught on cut bait and chicken liver.

Red Rock (Marion): Crappie fishing has been good in the Whitebreast area of the lake with jigs.

Below Lake Red Rock (Marion): White bass fishing has been excellent with jigs in the tailwater area. Channel catfish fishing has been fair using cut baits and liver.

Roberts Creek (Marion): Crappie fishing has been good to excellent using jigs and minnows. Bluegill fishing has been slow.

Lake Ahquabi (Warren): Crappie fishing is good on jigs and minnows. Bluegill and redear sunfish fishing has been good, with some good-sized fish caught. Largemouth bass fishing has been good, although most are below the legal length limit.

Hooper Lake (Warren): Crappie fishing has been good with jigs and minnows. Bluegill fishing has been good with small jigs and night crawlers. Largemouth bass fishing is best along the rocky dam area with crankbaits.

Contact: Dick McWilliams (515) 432-2823, Ext.108, for information on the above area lakes. For more information on general fishing in southwest Iowa, call the SW Regional Office in Lewis at 712-769-2587.

Farm Ponds: Fishing is good for bluegill in the shallows on night crawlers. Fishing is also good for crappies and largemouth bass. Channel catfish are biting on night crawlers and liver.

Green Valley (Union): Crappie can be caught from the stake beds on jigs and minnows. Some bluegill can be caught using jigs and night crawlers in the shallow spawning areas. Bullheads are biting on night crawlers. Channel catfish are biting on night crawlers or liver.

Three Mile (Union): Channel catfish fishing is good using night crawlers or liver. Crappie can be caught from the flooded trees on jigs or minnows. Walleyes are being caught on leeches and night crawlers from the mounds and steep drop-offs. Largemouth bass are around shallow cover.

Icaria (Adams): Fishing is good on small to mid-sized fish of all species. Channel catfish up to 2 ½ pounds can be caught with night crawlers. Small walleyes are biting well on night crawlers. Bullheads can be caught on night crawlers.

Binder Reservoir (Adams): Channel catfish up to 2 ½ pounds can be caught on cut bait or night crawlers. Some 10 to 14-inch largemouth bass can be caught near structure.

Little River (Decatur): Nice sized crappies can be caught from shore in the rocks or near cover on minnows or jigs. Anglers are catching some walleyes by trolling the points with night crawlers or leeches.

Wilson Lake (Taylor): Some nice bluegills are being caught near shore on night crawlers.

Fogle Lake (Ringgold): Nice bluegills can be caught near shore on night crawlers. Some crappie can be caught from the standing timber.

Three Fires (Taylor): Several 2-pound channel catfish are being caught using night crawlers or liver.

Contact: Gary Sobotka (641) 464-3108 for information on the above area lakes. For more information on general fishing in southwest Iowa, call the SW Regional Office in Lewis at 712-769-2587.

Orient (Adair): Fishing is good for 2 to 3-pound channel catfish. Crappies are slow along the shoreline using minnows with a bobber. Bluegills are good using night crawlers with bobber and small jigs.

Greenfield (Adair): Bluegills are excellent using jigs tipped with night crawlers fishing in the spawning beds. Fish from 7 to 8 inches are common.

Nodaway (Adair): Crappie fishing is fair using jigs and minnows. Channel catfish are being caught on night crawlers in shallow areas. Greenfield and Nodaway have low water levels. Shore anglers best fishing would be off the dam.

Meadow (Adair): Largemouth bass are being caught around brush piles. Bluegills are good using jigs on spawning beds. Crappies are fair around sunken trees using minnows.

Morman Trail (Adair): Fishing is good for bluegills on rocky shoreline along south side of lake. Channel catfish fishing is good using dead minnows, liver or night crawlers.

Littlefield (Audubon): Bluegill fishing is good using jigs on the spawning beds. Crappie fishing is fair using minnows on east bay under the road and along rocky shoreline. A few channel catfish are being caught using night crawlers.

Anita (Cass): The lake is still 5 feet low and has limited shoreline access. The south boat ramp can be used with a small (14 foot) boat. The lake contains a good fish population and fishing should be good. Fishing for 12 to 15-inch largemouth bass has been good.

Manawa (Pottawattamie): Wiper fishing has slowed. A few are being caught along south shore with small jigs and spinners. Walleyes are fair drifting minnows and night crawlers along north and west shorelines. Crappie fishing is fair using minnow and bobber in canals and along west shore. Bluegill fishing is good using wax worms with a bobber around the boat docks. A few channel catfish are being caught using dead minnows.

DeSoto Bend (Harrison): Crappie fishing is fair using jigs and minnows along rocky shorelines. Channel catfish are being caught in shallow areas using night crawlers or dead minnows. Bluegills can be caught on spawning beds using small jigs. Freshwater drum are being caught on east shoreline using night crawlers on the bottom.

Prairie Rose (Shelby): Crappies are good along rocky shorelines using jigs. Channel catfish fishing is good on liver and prepared baits in shallow bays. Largemouth bass, from 3 to 5 pounds, are being caught on rocky points using night crawlers. Bluegills are being caught on spawning beds using jigs.

Willow (Harrison): Crappie fishing is slow. A few are being caught using minnow and bobber in 8 to 10 feet of water. Bluegills being caught are 7 to 8 inches. Find spawning areas along shoreline.

Farm Ponds: Fishing is good for bluegills, using jigs tipped with night crawlers. Largemouth bass fishing is also good.

Contact: Chris Larson (712) 769-2587 for information on the above area lakes. For more information on general fishing in southwest Iowa, call the SW Regional Office in Lewis at 712-769-2587.

Southeast

Mississippi River Pools 16 to 19: The water temperature at Lock and Dam 16 (Muscatine) is 78 degrees and the river pool stage for Pool 16 is 10.83 feet. Water levels are expected to drop over the next several days.

Walleye fishing has been fair on the wing dams on **Pools 16 to 19** on crankbaits and live bait rigs. Anglers have been catching walleye off the wing dams in **upper Pool 16**. White bass fishing continues to be good in the tailwater and spillway areas below the

navigation dams, below the Arsenal Dam, in Sylvan Slough, Credit Island area, and the mouth of tributary rivers and streams on jigs, spinners, and minnows. Anglers still report channel catfish fishing has been excellent in the backwaters and the mouths of tributary rivers and streams on shad guts, cut shad, night crawlers and shrimp. Catfishing continues to be best in the tributary rivers, such as the Iowa and Rock rivers. A few flathead catfish are being caught in the deeper holes throughout the Mississippi River, in the tailwater areas and below the emergency spillways of the navigation dams. Fishing for both channel and flathead catfish has been best in the evening, night, and early morning. Bluegill fishing has been good in the backwaters and below the emergency spillways. Try fishing Sunset Marina and Andalusia in **Pool 16**, the Big Timber area and Huron Island in **Pool 17**, and Lake Odessa in **Pools 17/18**. These backwaters are also producing good numbers of channel catfish. Anglers are also catching a fair number of freshwater drum in the tailwater areas and below the emergency spillways of the navigation dams on night crawlers and crayfish.

Lake Odessa (Louisa): The bluegills are finishing nesting and are moving out to their summer areas. Wildlife is starting their summer drawdown period so boaters beware of the lower water levels.

Lake Darling (Washington): Water temperature is in the upper 70s and the low 80s. Look for catfish nesting around the riprap. For some big fish action try around the culvert piles for flathead catfish use some nice fresh green sunfish or bluegills caught in the lake for flathead bait.

Lake Geode (Henry): Bluegills are moving off the nest and to the edge of the weed lines. Anglers are still catching nice fish, but they are deeper.

Lake Belva Deer (Keokuk): The bluegills and redears are in shallow nesting, although with the warmer temperature will mean they will be moving out very soon. Silence is golden when targeting these fish on the nest. You can see them, so they can see you.

Lake Rathbun (Appanoose): Crappies have been hitting on small jigs fished around rocky shorelines. Walleyes have been hitting on crankbaits and worm harnesses. Channel catfish have been biting on night crawlers.

Lake Sugema (Van Buren): Bluegills and crappies have been hitting on small jigs. Walleyes have been hitting on jigs tipped with a minnow. Largemouth bass have been hitting on crankbaits and other artificial presentations.

Lake Wapello (Davis): Bluegills are hitting small jigs fished in shallow water areas around spawning grounds. Largemouth bass have been hitting on a variety of artificial lures. Channel catfish have been biting on liver.

Lake Keomah (Mahaska): Crappies and bluegills have been biting on small jigs fished around the dam and around the fishing jetties. Largemouth bass have been hitting artificial lures fished around the end of the jetties and submerged structure.

Lake Macbride (Johnson): Some crappies can still be caught in the shallower brush, but bluegills will be the best for action. Try in the shallow rocks with small worms.

Diamond Lake (Poweshiek): Bluegills and redears have moved to the shallows to spawn and are fairly aggressive. The channel catfish are starting to bite now and fishing should continue to improve.

Hannen Lake (Benton): Use small jigs and/or worms in the shallows for spawning bluegills. Some largemouth bass are also being caught on artificial lures.

Pleasant Creek (Linn): Crappies were being caught last week and some should still be in the shallow brush. The bluegills have moved in to spawn and are willing to bite on small worms.

Otter Creek (Tama): Anglers looking for action and tasty fish should come here for yellow bass. The size is marginal, 6 to 8 inches with an occasional larger fish, but numbers will add up for plenty of meat for a couple of meals. Bluegills should also be hitting in the shallows.

Kent Lake (Johnson): Bluegills are biting. Fish in the shallows with small worms. Channel catfish are also being picked up on night crawlers.

County Conservation Board Ponds: Do not overlook these smaller bodies of water for some nice-sized bluegills. Jigs tipped with worms or a fly rod and popper fished over the nests will catch a nice batch of male bluegills.

Skunk River (Washington): Water temperature in the low 80s is warm enough for the flatheads and channel catfish to nest. Target the high cut banks and brush piles as places that may hold fish. Also look for mulberry trees to fish under as their fruit is coming ripe and catfish like to feed on the fruit as it falls into the water.

For more information on fishing in southeast Iowa, call the regional office in Brighton at 319-694-2430.

Northeast

Mississippi River Pools 9 to 15: Water levels on the Mississippi River continue to fall. River stage is 8.28 feet at Lansing, 7.23 feet at Guttenberg, 9.24 feet at Dubuque, and 7.63 feet at Bellevue. Main channel water temperature in Pool 10 is 77 degrees. Fishing has really picked up with the lower water levels.

Bluegills can be found on their spawning beds in the backwater areas in **Pools 9 to 15**. Bluegills are being caught on a piece of night crawler floated under a bobber in the shallow areas along the shoreline. Areas like DeSoto Bay (**Pool 9**), Sny Magill (**Pool 10**) and Dead Slough (**Pool 11**) are good backwaters to try. Nice bluegills are still being caught in the tailwater areas of the lock and dams by fishing on the bottom with a piece of night crawler in shallow, slack water areas. Bluegills are also being caught in the recently renovated harbor at the Guttenberg DNR boat ramp.

Crappies are being caught in the backwater areas in **Pools 9 to 11** using hair jigs or floating a minnow under a slip bobber. Look for backwater areas with some depth and fish next to woody structure. Crappies can also be caught next to woody structure in flowing backwater sloughs like Johnson Slough (**Pool 10**), Wyalusing Slough (**Pool 10**) and Cassville Slough (**Pools 10 and 11**).

Freshwater drum (sheephead) fishing is excellent in **Pools 9 to 15**. These fish are being caught along the main channel by fishing a crawler on the bottom.

Some nice drum are also being caught in the tailwaters on jigs or other bottom-bouncing lures. Walleye fishing is good trolling crankbaits or three-ways tipped with a night crawler in the backwater sloughs in **Pools 9 to 15** or back trolling a three-way tipped with a half of a night crawler above the wing dams.

Largemouth bass fishing has been good throughout **Pools 9 to 15** using a variety of baits and lures including shad and crawfish imitating crankbaits, jig and twister tails,

night crawlers under a bobber, and soft plastics. Focus on areas with riprapped shorelines or woody structure in the backwater areas. Also try spinner baits thrown along the weed edges for hungry bass.

Fishing has picked up for channel catfish on night crawlers and stink baits fished along the upper sides of snags in deeper water in **Pools 9 to 15**.

Smallmouth bass are being caught along rocky shorelines with current and associated along wing dams in **Pools 9 to 15**.

Channel catfish are on the pre-spawn feed and can be caught on cut baits and stink baits in flowing backwater sloughs and in the main channel. Also try floating a minnow or crawler under a bobber in the rocks above the spillway in Guttenberg and Ackerman's Cut (**Pool 11**)

Flathead catfish are hitting live bait in **Pools 12 to 15**.

White bass (stripers) are biting small spinners, white jigs and silver or white crankbaits in the tailwaters of the locks and dams (**Pools 9 to 11**). Look for schools of white bass working the surface chasing minnows on sand flats or around wing dams. Cast an in-line spinner or smaller crank bait into these schools for some exciting action.

Cedar River (Floyd and Mitchell): Smallmouth bass and walleye fishing are good on dark colored jigs.

Cedar River (Black Hawk): Channel catfishing was good to excellent on cut baits, stink baits and night crawlers fished along rocky shorelines.

Maquoketa River (Delaware): The Maquoketa is in excellent condition and fishing is good for bluegill, channel catfish and smallmouth bass. Smallmouth bass fishing is good to excellent below the Delhi dam in the catch-and-release area on artificial and live baits.

Turkey River (Howard, Fayette and Clayton): Water levels and clarity are good. Smallmouth bass can be caught on crankbaits and dark colored jigs.

Upper Iowa River (Winneshiek and Allamakee): Smallmouth bass fishing is good on crankbaits and jigs.

Volga River (Fayette and Clayton): The Volga is clear and smallmouth bass fishing is good using crankbaits and jigs tipped with a twister tail.

Wapsipinicon River (Buchanan): Channel catfish are biting on cut baits and night crawlers. Bluegill fishing was fair to good on a piece of night crawler fished under a bobber.

Big Woods (Black Hawk): Channel catfish are biting on minnows fished in the shallow water around snags.

Lake Delhi (Delaware): Bluegill fishing is fair on small jigs tipped with a piece of worm or wax worm under a bobber. Bluegills are now spawning on the rocks and woody structure, so fish close to shore during the early mornings to avoid heavy boat traffic. Crappie fishing is picking up using minnows fished under a bobber. Anglers are also catching some largemouth bass casting spinners and crankbaits along the shoreline. Channel catfish are biting on dead minnows and cut baits.

Lake Hendricks (Howard): Largemouth bass and bluegills are hitting night crawlers fished close to the bottom under a bobber. Channel catfish are starting to bite.

Lake Meyer (Winneshiek): Bluegill fishing is excellent on angle worms and night crawlers fished under a bobber in the warmer water close to shore. Largemouth bass are hitting night crawlers. Crappie fishing is fair on minnows fished in the deeper

water next to structure. Northern pike can be seen swimming close to the bluegill spawning beds. Fishing will be picking up for channel catfish as the water temperatures continue to rise.

South Prairie Lake (Black Hawk): Bluegill fishing is good next to the shoreline using a small jig tipped with a worm under a bobber.

Volga Lake (Fayette): Bluegills are on their spawning beds and fishing is excellent using a night crawler under a bobber. Channel catfish are also starting to bite. Largemouth bass are hitting night crawlers. Crappie and perch fishing is fair.

Trout fishing excellent and stream conditions are good to excellent. Stocking information for specific streams can be found on the web by going through the DNR web site at www.iowadnr.com or directly to <http://www.iowadnr.com/fish/news/stockrep/groupstock.pdf>. Anglers may also call the recorded trout stocking information hotline at 563-927-5736.

For information on fishing in northeast Iowa, call the regional office in Manchester at 563-927-3276.

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